

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Francisco Baires and I am from Manchester Connecticut.

I stand in support of HB 6616: "An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status". Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare we need. If Connecticut wants a future that includes healthy families and a stable, thriving and growing workforce that is ready to meet the needs of our future, Connecticut must ensure that these individuals up to age 26 have access to health coverage.

I was born in El Salvador in 1977 and came to the United States as a baby. I was raised in Texas but have been living in Connecticut with my wife and our 2 sons since 2014. My wife is a professor at Eastern Connecticut State University, and I work for Capitol Region Education Council. I am writing to you today because although my family has health insurance, too many people in communities across CT are denied it.

I know first-hand about the importance of health insurance as I suffer from a physical disability from a traumatic brain injury that resulted from being physically assaulted 15 years ago. As someone who continues to need treatment, I write to say that ALL CT residents deserve the same sense of dignity and hope that I have due to the fact that I have access to health care. I do not know where I would be if I was inhumanly denied access to the medical care, physical therapy, and counseling I needed to get my life back on track.

No person in CT should be left to wonder how they will get treatment they need. I support HB 6616 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation out of committee in its current form - to expand HUSKY access to age 26. Our work does not end with expanding access up to age 12 nor with expanding access up to age 18. And that work must continue this year by expanding HUSKY access up to age 26. Do the right thing! Stand on the right side of history!

Looking forward, I ask the committee to work towards opening access to all immigrants regardless of age.

Francisco Baires  
Husband, Father, Community Member